

# Greener Janitorial Products Options & the New Green Seal GS-37 Standard

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**Informed Green Solutions, Inc.**

# Environmentally Preferable Purchasing and Third Party Certification

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# Informed Green Solutions



- Non-profit dedicated to educating building stakeholders/decision makers on the benefits of environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP)
  - Cleaning for Health
    - Evaluations on current practices and products
    - Technical assistance on transitioning to a Cleaning for Health program
  - Office products, electronics, green travel and conference planning, purchasing for LEED certification
  - Governmental purchasing

# What Is Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP)?

**Purchasing products or services that “have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance or disposal of the product or service.”\***

\*U.S. EPA

# Third-party Certifiers

- Green Seal™ – US based non-profit organization 
- EcoLogo™ – Environment Canada managed by TerraChoice 
  - Institutional cleaning products, hand cleaners, janitorial paper products, retail cleaning products, paints, windows, office paper product etc.

# Third-party Certifiers

- EPEAT- computers
- GreenGuard
  - Measures emissions of products
    - Indoor air quality certification
    - Children and schools
    - Building construction
- Chlorine Free Products Association
  - Office and janitorial paper products

# Other Programs

- Design for the Environment – EPA
  - Developing standards that will be third-party certified for a range of products
- Carpet and Rug Institute
  - Green Label program for rugs, vacuum cleaners and carpet extractors
- Forest Stewardship Council
  - Wood products

# Third-party Certification

- “Independently Third-Party Certified” means that products have been certified by an established and legitimate, nationally-recognized program developed with the purpose of identifying environmentally preferable products.

# GS-37 Revision

- Third-edition was adopted in 2006
- Much had changed in the industrial cleaning products market since then
- Purchasers were calling for inclusion of additional criteria

# GS-37 Revision Process

- Stakeholder Group
  - Green Seal sent out a call for stakeholders interested in participating
  - Stakeholders were divided into groups, academia, state purchasers, NGOs, industry etc.
  - Groups elected representatives who could then vote on the proposed revisions



# Green Seal

- GS-37 Original Criteria
  - Toxicity to humans
  - Toxicity to aquatic organisms
  - Recyclable packaging
  - Combustibility
  - Animal testing
  - Biodegradability
  - Volatile organic content

# GS-37 Revision

- Uses a hazard-based approach rather than a risk-based approach
  - Protects sensitive populations
    - Children, users, sensitive building occupants
- Adds additional criteria
  - Asthmagens
  - Bioaccumulating compounds
  - Inhalation toxicity
  - Skin absorption etc.

# GS-37 Revision

- Adds additional prohibited ingredients and more stringent criteria in other areas
  - Fragrances
  - Labeling
  - Mutagens
  - Packaging requirements
  - Training
  - VOC limits

# GS-37 Revision

- Asthmagens
  - The undiluted product shall not contain any ingredients that have been identified as asthmagens, per the definition in this standard
- Definition
  - Substances designated as asthma-causing agents by the AOEC\*, which after review by the AOEC have met the AOEC sensitization criteria

\*Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics

# GS-37 Revision

- Chronic inhalation toxicity added
  - The as used product shall not contain ingredients that cause chronic inhalation toxicity
    - Specifies the European Chemicals Bureau R48/23 list
    - OECD Harmonized Integrated Classification System for Human Health and Environmental Hazards of Chemical Substances and Mixtures
    - Also allows chamber testing using the Greenguard Children and Schools Certification for Cleaners and Cleaning Maintenance Products and Systems

# GS-37 Revision

- Mutagens were added to the carcinogen/reproductive toxin category
  - The undiluted product shall not contain any ingredients or components that are carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins. The product shall not contain any ingredients known to produce or release carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins.

# GS-37 Revision

- Prohibited Ingredients
  - Added heavy metals including, lead, hexavalent chromium, or selenium; either in the elemental form or compounds
  - 2-butoxyethanol
  - phthalates

# Results of the Revision

- Nearly 100 products have been certified
- Hundreds more are undergoing certification
- Health of building occupants and custodial staff is better protected

# Contact

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